A SERMON

Preached at the

ORDINATION

OF THE REVEREND

CHARLES CASE, *A.M.* &c.

[Price One Shilling.]

BRITISH MUSEUM

A

SERMON

Preached at the

ORDINATION

Of the Reverend

CHARLES CASE, *A.M.*

At WITHAM in ESSEX, *October* 15, 1767,

By JOHN ROGERS:

Together with an

INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE,

By THOMAS DAVIDSON:

Mr CASE's CONFESSION of FAITH,

and a CHARGE delivered to Him,

By THOMAS GIBBONS, *D.D.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

AN INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE,

BY THE REVEREND

Mr THOMAS DAVIDSON.

Introductory Diſcourſe.

OUR bleſſed LORD and Redeemer has promiſed in his word, that he will be with his ſervants and people always, even unto the end of the world: which promiſe, among other things, ſecures the continuance and preſervation of his Church, and a Goſpel-miniſtry in it to the end of time, when the myſtery of GOD ſhall be finiſhed.

The office of the holy Miniſtry, however it may be contemned and vilified by ſome, bears the ſtamp of Heaven's authority, being one of the precious gifts which our exalted Redeemer purchaſed for, and beſtowed on his Church, when *he aſcended on high, and led captivity captive* (*a*): and it is of ſtanding uſe in the Churches of CHRIST, which neither are nor can be completely organized without it.

The generality even of them who attend on Goſpel ordinances have no higher view of the ſolemn work we are this day to be engaged

(*a*) Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12.

engaged in among you, than the making choice of a perſon duly qualified to ſupport the dignity of the character of a Miniſter of the Goſpel; to lead the worſhip of a Chriſtian Aſſembly; and to be able, with ſome meaſure of propriety, to diſcourſe on divine ſubjects in a ſtated courſe of miniſtrations, which people, for the ſake of decency, and according to laudable cuſtom, are to attend for their inſtruction and edification. This view of the matter is good in itſelf, but it is by far too narrow; for it carries a great deal more in it, which, when duly conſidered, is ſufficient to fill us all with ſerious impreſſions; eſpecially ſuch of us as are more immediately concerned in the ſolemnity of the work of this day.

That a Church's being furniſhed with an able Goſpel-miniſter is of the greateſt moment and importance will be evident if we conſider, that hereby it more fully and completely anſwers the character which the Apoſtle gives of every Goſpel-church (*b*), *The pillar and ground of truth*; that is, where the truths of the Goſpel are not only affectionately and cordially received with faith and love, in oppoſition to unbelief; and not only zealouſly held and defended againſt errors of every kind; but where, by the faithful and plain preaching of the word, they are all to be found, as in their proper ſeat and place; and

(*b*) 1 Tim. iii. 15.

and where they are daily publiſhed, ſo as to be ſeen and read of all men, and ſet before ſinners, as the alone foundation of their faith and hope.

One thing would make this view of the matter plainer ſtill, if the hearts of them who attend on the Miniſtry of the Word were caſt into the mould of it, ſo as to reſemble it in point of truth and holineſs: this would be indeed a ſetting it in a ſtriking point of view, and would be, what the Apoſtle calls, *an holding forth the word of life* (*c*).

Hereby alſo proviſion is made for the inſtruction of the ignorant, and in an ordinary way for ſavingly converting ſuch as are in a ſtate of nature to the faith of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; for the opening of the eyes of the blind, turning them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to GOD; as well as for edifying the body of CHRIST, by building them up in faith and holineſs, and thereby making them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light. In a word, hereby all the truths of the Goſpel, and the holy inſtitutions of CHRIST, are handed down from one genetion to another, which otherwiſe would be in danger of being either corrupted or loſt.

Suffer me to ſay one thing more, my brethren, from which the awfulneſs and ſolemnity of this day's work will be evident; and

(*c*) Phil. ii. 16.

that is, that which follows as the immediate conſequence of it, namely, the miniſtration of the Goſpel here, by the LORD's ſervant, our dear brother, who is this day to be ſet apart to the paſtoral office in this church, will have everlaſting effects on the ſouls of this people, either to their eternal ſalvation or condemnation. It may with great truth be ſaid of Miniſters as of their great LORD and Maſter, that they are *ſet for the fall and riſing again of many* (*c*); and that whether we conſider what is, or ought to be the great ſubject-matter of their preaching, or the final iſſue of it. The ſubject-matter of our preaching is, JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED; this is the great, the leading theme of the Goſpel, that which puts life, ſpirit, and efficacy into the whole of our miniſtrations: for, taking all the truths of the word of GOD, with relation either to faith or practice, even in their utmoſt latitude and extent, if they are not treated of in ſuch a manner, as to lead people to ſee the neceſſary relation they have to HIM, and how they all center in HIM, truly we ſhall preach to very little purpoſe, I am ſure, to no ſaving purpoſe.

But we know that this way of preaching, as it was in the Apoſtles days, ſo it continues to be in our days alſo, a ſtumbling-block to ſome, and fooliſhneſs to others. And then as to the final iſſue of our preaching, may it

(*c*) Luke ii. 34.

it not be ſaid of the moſt part of the hearers of the Goſpel, as the Prophet ſaid of old? *Who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the* LORD *been revealed (d)?* Some believe to the ſaving of the ſoul; others believe not, and ſo are hardened; ſome receive the truth in the love thereof; others reject the counſel of GOD againſt themſelves, and carry their oppoſition to the truth ſo far as to contradict and blaſpheme. O! what heart can conceive the awful ſolemnity of that word? *For we are unto* GOD *a ſweet ſavour of* CHRIST *in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh. To the one we are the ſavour of death unto death; and to the other the ſavour of life unto life: and who is ſufficient for theſe things (e)?* If this was duly conſidered, it would make Miniſters preach and people hear in another manner than, alas! for moſt part they do.

Churches ought to be exceeding cautious who they call and admit to the work of the miniſtry and the paſtoral office among them; and therefore they ſhould take ſome previous trial of their Soundneſs in the Faith, their Piety, Prudence, and other miniſterial qualifications, before they put themſelves under their miniſterial inſpection and care. And Miniſters or Paſtors of Churches, to whom what is called Ordination, or the ſolemn ſetting apart of them who are thus called to

(*d*) Iſa. lii. 1. (*e*) 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.

the work of the miniſtry is particularly committed, and to whom it moſt properly belongs, ought alſo to be exceeding cautious whom they recommend to Churches, or ordain to the Miniſtry; for an error here may be of fatal conſequence. O! the danger there is in conſenting to, or, being inſtrumental any how, in committing the care of ſouls to an unſkilful or an unfaithful ſhepherd; for the blood of ſouls is a dreadful thing! But I truſt, and firmly believe, we are in no danger of this kind in what we are going about this day; and may therefore, with the greateſt freedom, proceed to all the parts of the work of it, in ſolemnly ſetting apart our dear brother to the work of the miniſtry, and the paſtoral office in this Church.

Afterwards Mr Davidſon *deſired Mr* Caſe *to give a Confeſſion of his Faith, and received it from him, as follows.*

A CONFESSION OF FAITH,

BY THE REVEREND

CHARLES CASE, *A. M.*

A

CONFESSION

OF

FAITH,

BY THE LATE REV.

CHARLES CASE, A.M.

A

Confeſſion of Faith, &c.

BEING fully convinced of the exiſtence of an abſolutely perfect Being, who is firſt and ſupreme, and being perſuaded that the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament are a complete revelation of his will, I derive all my ſentiments from thoſe ſacred Writings, reſolving to be determined by no other authority whatever; ſince theſe containing, in plain and (to the meaneſt capacity) intelligible terms, all that is neceſſary to be believed and done in order to ſalvation, and coming with a divine authority, ſuperſede the neceſſity of ſetting up any other rule of faith and practice, and make it impious preſumption ſo much as to attempt it. The ſacred Scriptures therefore, and the ſacred Scriptures only, I intend, in reliance on divine ſtrength, to make the rule of my faith, conduct, and future miniſtrations; and ſhall therefore, in compliance, Sir, with your reaſonable requeſt, give a ſummary view

of

of what, after reading, meditation, and prayer, I apprehend to be the principal truths contained in thoſe holy books.

Theſe ſacred Writings preſent to my view (what nature could never fully diſcloſe) that GOD is a being of infinite perfections—who did exiſt from eternity, and is conſequently ſelf-exiſtent, independent, and everlaſting—almighty in power—wiſe in counſel—wonderful in working—a GOD of truth, and without iniquity—juſt and good—the Creator and Preſerver of all things viſible and inviſible—the head over all things, ruling and governing all his creatures, and all their actions—diſpoſing of all things for his own glory, for which end they are and were created: *for of him, and through him, and to him are all things (f).* Though this all-glorious Being is One in his eſſence, yet he is revealed under three characters, and ſo ſpoken of, that we muſt conclude there are Three, what we may call Perſons in the Godhead, or three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghoſt; and theſe Three are One: they are all of one incomprehenſible nature, and equal in power and glory.

By the ſame divine Word I am made acquainted, that GOD made man upright, and fitted him to glorify and enjoy himſelf; but that

(f) Rom. xi. 36.

that he loſt his original rectitude by a breach of the divine command; acted contrary to the end for which he was made, and thereby forfeited the divine favour, and loſt all that ſpiritual and ſublime enjoyment, for which he was deſigned, and of which he was made capable.

And not only did *Adam* himſelf ſuffer for his ſin and folly, but I am authoriſed by the divine Word to believe, that all mankind are hereby involved in guilt and defilement: for, *by one man's diſobedience, many were conſtituted ſinners* (*g*). *By the offence of one*, or *one offence, judgment came upon all men to condemnation* (*h*). And all *being conceived in ſin, and ſhapen in iniquity* (*i*), *the thoughts of every heart naturally are only evil continually* (*k*).

And ſuch I learn from the records of divine truth, is the ſad ſtate of man now, that he cannot help himſelf out of theſe miſerable circumſtances, and is rendered morally incapable of regaining, by himſelf, either the divine favour, or his former rectitude, having neither knowledge nor will to do good, and GOD being ſo righteous as not to paſs by offences; for, *he will by no means clear the guilty* (*l*); his truth, his juſtice, and his holineſs, *all* forbid it.

(*g*) Rom. v. 19.
(*h*) Rom. v. 18.
(*i*) Pſalm li. 5.
(*k*) Gen. vi. 5.
(*l*) Exod. xxxiv. 7.

I learn from the divine teſtimony, that GOD from eternity foreſeeing that this would be the miſerable ſituation of all mankind, contrived a way to ſave ſome of them; choſe a *certain* number to eternal life, *through ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth* (*m*), and entered into covenant with his own Son to redeem them; and that all this was the effect of his own good pleaſure, and not any thing good foreſeen in the ſouls that were choſen. *He hath choſen us in* CHRIST *before the foundation of the world*; not becauſe he ſaw we ſhould be holy, *but that we might be holy, and without blame before him in love; having predeſtinated us to the adoption of children by* JESUS CHRIST *to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, to the praiſe of the glory of his grace* (*n*).

Some of *Adam*'s race being thus choſen to ſalvation, the Son of GOD, who had undertaken to be the Redeemer of man, came in the fulneſs of the time *to finiſh tranſgreſſion, and make an end of ſin* (*o*), and to redeem thoſe, and thoſe *only*, whom the Father had given to him.

The way in which our bleſſed LORD accompliſhed the work of ſalvation, was, by taking to himſelf human nature, being made under the law, and fulfilling it; revealing the will of GOD as a Prophet; giving commands

(*m*) 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. (*n*) Epheſ. i. 4—6.
(*o*) Dan. ix. 24.

mands as a King; and dying on the croſs as a Sacrifice, to ſatisfy a broken law and offended juſtice; and ſo procuring pardon, juſtification, and eternal life for his people.

The evidence is very clear, and as great as can be wiſhed, yea, greater than in any other caſe would be required, that our Saviour, after he had been crucified, dead, and buried, roſe again from the dead as he himſelf had foretold he ſhould, and aſcended into heaven, to take his ſeat at the right hand of his Father, there to intercede for, rule over, inſtruct, and beſtow all bleſſings upon his people; *being exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Iſrael, and remiſſion of ſins* (*p*); and thus ſtill exerciſing the offices of Prophet, Prieſt, and King.

The ſacred Oracles declare, that *by him all that believe, are juſtified from all things from which they could not be juſtified by the law of Moſes* (*q*); and that *whoſoever believes in him, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins* (*r*).

By juſtification, I underſtand a declaration, that any perſon is completely righteous; ſo that I am well perſuaded no man could ever be juſtified any other way, than by the imputation of the righteouſneſs of CHRIST unto him; ſince, having none of his own, he could not juſtly and truly be declared righteous without the imputation of the

(*p*) Acts v. 31.
(*q*) Acts xiii. 39.
(*r*) Acts x. 43.

righteouſneſs of another. I am therefore fully convinced, that the ſole cauſe of the pardon and juſtification of a believer is the blood and righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST; *there being no other name given among men, whereby any can be ſaved, but the name of* CHRIST (*s*).

I abhor the ſentiment, That the Goſpel is a declaration that there is forgiveneſs with GOD for *impenitent, unbelieving ſinners.* I cannot find the ſhadow of proof of ſuch a ſentiment. The Goſpel appears to me the direct contrary, to wit, a proclamation of pardon for every ſinner that repents and believes; and, inſtead of forgiveneſs, a double curſe is denounced on thoſe who refuſe to accept its contents.

I am far from thinking that the whole of ſalvation conſiſts in the pardon and juſtification of a ſinner. This is but a part of it; ſince, having loſt the divine image, as well as favour, we muſt be renewed as well as forgiven. Wherefore every one that is juſtified by faith, is alſo *created anew in* CHRIST JESUS *unto good works* (*t*); *and ſanctified throughout in body, ſoul, and ſpirit* (*u*). So that that faith is of no avail which does not produce good works, and that comfort merely preſumptive that does not ariſe from a good hope

(*s*) Acts iv. 12. (*t*) Epheſ. ii. 10.
(*u*) 1 Theſſ. v. 23.

hope of intereſt in CHRIST, from a view of our faith working by love.

I cannot think it poſſible for any man to repent, believe, or do good works, until renewed by the Spirit of GOD, whoſe office it is to change our natures, and help us to perform the will of GOD (*w*). The mind of man is ſo blind, his will ſo perverſe, his affections ſo miſplaced and diſordered, and all his powers ſo ſet on evil, that he would never turn to GOD or goodneſs, was it not for the almighty power and efficacious operations of the Spirit of grace: for, *the carnal mind is enmity againſt* GOD; *for it is not ſubject to the law of* GOD, *neither indeed can be* (*x*).

I am perſuaded that all who are called by grace, ſhall be finally brought to glory; for, *whom* GOD *calls, them he alſo juſtifies; and whom he juſtifies, them he alſo glorifies* (*y*). But then none are hence to preſume, that however they ſin, yet they are ſafe; but we are to ſhew our intereſt in this privilege by our perſeverance in faith and holineſs, *without which no man ſhall ſee the* LORD (*z*).

I apprehend that the Scriptures require of all that are called by grace, to teſtify their faith in CHRIST, by publickly walking in all his ordinances. In order to which it is neceſſary that Chriſtians ſhould be united together

(*w*) Acts xvi. 14.
(*x*) Rom. viii. 7.
(*y*) Rom. viii. 30.
(*z*) Heb. xii. 14.

ther in love and fellowſhip, watching over, praying with and for one another, rebuking, exhorting, warning, and comforting each other; hearing the word of GOD, and eating and drinking together at the LORD's table, as CHRIST has commanded; and withdrawing from ſuch as walk diſorderly, that by ſo doing, their ſouls may be ſaved in the day of the LORD. Since this is the caſe, it is very plain, *that only* can be a regular *Chriſtian Church*, which is founded on the laws of CHRIST, as the *ſupreme* and *ſole* head, and has the choice of officers, and exerciſe of diſcipline within itſelf, according to his appointment.

The only officers I read of, as ſtated in the Church, are Biſhops and Deacons: the latter to take care of the temporal, the former of the ſpiritual affairs of the Church, to have the overſight of the flock, and lead, teach, and adminiſter the Sacraments.

The *only* Sacraments that are inſtituted by CHRIST, are Baptiſm, and the LORD's Supper. The former is to be uſed as a profeſſion that we are Chriſtians, in the ſame manner as Circumciſion was in Old-Teſtament times, that they who were circumciſed were of the then only true religion; and ſince Baptiſm has the ſame deſign with Circumciſion, it is to be adminiſtered in the ſame extent, to wit, to the perſon profeſſing his faith in CHRIST, and his infant offſpring; both

both ordinances ſignifying the putting off the former converſation, and the renewal of the mind by the holy Spirit. The LORD'S Supper was inſtituted by CHRIST, for an open acknowledgment of our faith in him as a crucified Saviour, as a ſign of our living on him as the ſupport of our ſouls, and for the ſtrengthening the faith and love of Chriſtians.

When the Chriſtian has finiſhed the work deſigned for him here below, he ſhall be taken to a better world. The body being returned to duſt, the ſoul ſhall immediately on its ſeparation be cleanſed from all remaining corruption, and introduced into the immediate preſence of GOD; and the body, being purified in the grave, ſhall hereafter be raiſed, and made like CHRIST'S glorious body, and body and ſoul being reunited ſhall both for ever live in immortal vigour and glory.

The Scriptures frequently aſſure us, that there will be a day when He, who once ſtood arraigned at *Pilate*'s bar, ſhall himſelf deſcend as the Judge of all; that then the Archangel ſhall ſound the trumpet, that all that are in their graves ſhall hear and come forth, that they ſhall ſtand before CHRIST, the Judge, and that he ſhall reward every man according to his works; that *to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, have ſought for glory, honour, and immortality, he ſhall ren-*

der

der eternal life (*a*): but that *upon them who are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs, he ſhall pour out indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh* (*b*).

This appears to me the ſum of the truths contained in the Goſpel. Theſe doctrines I hope to continue in, and, in dependence on all-ſufficient ſtrength, am determined to continue in, until ſome more comforting, more quickening, and more purifying ſhall be placed in their ſtead. And that I may by the Spirit of truth be led into all the truth, be eſtabliſhed in it, be influenced by it, and made ſucceſsful to the propagation of it, I now earneſtly beg the prayers of you, my Chriſtian Brethren, and of you, my Reverend and Honoured Fathers.

(*a*) Rom. ii. 6, 7. (*b*) Rom. ii. 8, 9.

THE

THE

SERMON,

BY THE REVEREND

Mr JOHN ROGERS.

A

SERMON, &c.

THE part allotted *me* in this day's ſervice is to ſpeak a word to you the members of this Church, who are now ſettled with a Paſtor or Biſhop over you; I therefore deſire your ſerious and candid attention to what may be attempted from that portion of Scripture which you will find in

2 COR. IV. 5.

For we preach not ourſelves, but CHRIST JESUS *the* LORD; *and ourſelves your ſervants for* JESUS *ſake.*

THESE are the words of one who could dare to ſay, *I ſuppoſe I was not a whit behind the very chiefeſt apoſtles (a)*; either in gifts or graces, labours

(a) 2 Cor. xi. 5.

labours or ſufferings, zeal or faithfulneſs, travels or ſucceſs in the ſervice of CHRIST and ſouls; yea, of one who rather excelled, than fell ſhort of all his fellow-labourers in all theſe things. And though he was far from boaſting of himſelf, nay, careful to *glory only in the* LORD (*b*), yet could ſay, *in labours more abundant, in ſtripes above meaſure, in priſons more frequent, in deaths oft (c)*. To which he adds a large catalogue of his ſufferings, 2 *Cor.* xi. 24—33. and alſo 1 *Cor.* iv. And indeed the like accounts are interſperſed in ſeveral other parts of theſe his two Epiſtles to the Church at *Corinth*, as well as in the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, and elſewhere.

One ſhould be ready to think, that even malice itſelf would bluſh to blacken a character ſo diſintereſted and innocent, as was that of this great man's, who could ſay to the *Theſſalonians*, as well as to all other Churches of the Saints, *Ye are witneſſes, and* GOD *alſo, how holily, and juſtly, and unblameably we behaved ourſelves among you that believe* (*d*). Yet falſe teachers then, as is the caſe now, diſturbing the peace of Churches, endeavoured to draw a ſhade over this ſtar of the firſt magnitude, leſt its radiant luſtre ſhould eclipſe the glory of their deceitful glare. This conduct of theirs put the Apoſtle upon *becoming a fool in glorying*, as he himſelf expreſſes

(*b*) 1 Cor. i. 31. 2 Cor. x. 17. (*c*) 2 Cor. xi. 23.
(*d*) 1 Theſſ. ii. 10.

preſſes it (*e*), that he might retrieve his own honour in the eyes of the Churches, and vindicate his reputation againſt *deceitful workers (f)*. For, let them ſay what they would of him, he had received this miniſtry from the LORD JESUS CHRIST himſelf, as alſo mercy to keep him from fainting in the diſcharge of it. With the ſtricteſt truth he could avouch for himſelf and his fellow-Apoſtles, as he does in the ſecond verſe of the chapter wherein the text is: *But we have renounced the hidden things of diſhoneſty; not walking in craftineſs, nor handling the word of* GOD *deceitfully; but by manifeſtation of the truth, commending ourſelves to every man's conſcience in the ſight of* GOD. Yet was his Goſpel hid from many; but, O! awful caſe! it was *to them that are loſt*; whoſe minds were under the blinding, infatuating influence of the devil, called the God of this world, who put forth the utmoſt of his malice and power to *keep out the light of the glorious goſpel of* CHRIST, *who is the image of* GOD, *from ſhining into them.*

The words I have read unto you contain the ſentiments and conduct of this juſtly celebrated Miniſter of the Goſpel; they tell you what he did as a Preacher, and in what light he viewed his own character. The former he expreſſes both in a negative and poſitive form, *We preach not ourſelves.* We neither

(*e*) 2 Cor. xii. 11. (*f*) 2 Cor. xii. 13.

neither make ourſelves the ſubject-matter of our miniſtry, nor the ſcope and end of it. We do not exalt ourſelves, our own name, honour, reputation, or glory, or ſeek to advance our ſecular intereſts among you; *but we preach* CHRIST JESUS *the* LORD. He is the grand object to which we direct the eye of faith for the ſalvation of our own ſouls; and his perſon, offices, righteouſneſs, grace, and ſalvation, we make the conſtant theme of all our Sermons and Diſcourſes to you. Here then you ſee,

(1) The duty of all Goſpel-miniſters, they are not to preach themſelves, but CHRIST JESUS the LORD. You are to hold ſuch in reputation; but their own reputation is not the ſubject or ſcope of their preaching. And it becomes every faithful Miniſter of CHRIST to keep a ſtrict and conſtant guard over his own heart and miniſtrations, that *ſelf* does not in any ſhape creep in, and ſully either, but that he preſerves a ſingle eye to the glory of CHRIST in all his labours.

We preach CHRIST JESUS the LORD: CHRIST, the true and promiſed Meſſiah, the anointed one of GOD, conſtituted, commiſſioned, and qualified to be the only Mediator between GOD and man: JESUS, the Saviour of ſinners, who came to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt, ſave his people from their ſins, and from wrath to come, the juſt demerit of ſin; to ſave them in himſelf with

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an everlaſting ſalvation: and the LORD, Lord of all, Lord of heaven and earth, of angels, men, and devils, having a ſovereign dominion over all things in the right of his deity, and a grant of all power in heaven and earth made to him in his mediatorial character and office-capacity; for the ſufferings of death, he is *crowned with glory and honour* (*g*); and *hath all things put under his feet*; being *head of the church, and head over all things to the church* (*h*).

(2) Obſerve the light in which the Apoſtle viewed his own and his fellow-labourers character, and the office they bore in the Church of GOD; *ourſelves your ſervants for* JESUS *ſake*. Let none conceive in their minds a contemptuous idea of this character, *ſervants*. Elſewhere the Apoſtle magnifies his office (*i*), and gives to himſelf and his fellow-miniſters, the honourable titles of the Miniſters of CHRIST, good Stewards of the myſteries of GOD (*k*), Ambaſſadors for CHRIST (*l*), Guides, or Rulers (*m*), *&c.* But the nature of all theſe high offices is purely ſpiritual; and therefore neither did our Apoſtle, nor will any like-minded with him, claim *dominion over your faith, but only be helpers of your joy* (*n*). Miniſters are ſervants of CHRIST, and it is their honour to be ſo eſteemed,

(*g*) Heb. ii. 9.
(*h*) Epheſ. i. 22, 23.
(*i*) Rom. xi. 13.
(*k*) 1 Cor. iv. 1.
(*l*) 2 Cor. v. 20.
(*m*) Heb. xiii. 17.
(*n*) 2 Cor. i. 24.

eſteemed, and they are ſervants of the Churches of CHRIST for his ſake: they ſerve them in their moſt valuable intereſts, even thoſe of their ſouls, and to promote their ſalvation. Now in both theſe particular parts of the text, the Apoſtle is an example to all the Miniſters of CHRIST in all ages of the Church: and I hope our brother, your honoured Paſtor, will aim through grace herein to imitate him. And may all of us engaged in the ſacred employ, look more intenſely on ſo accurate a copy, and attempt to draw the ſtrokes of our Sermons, and direct the tenor of our conduct with greater exactneſs by it!

The doctrine of the text is this. "That "it is the duty of Goſpel-miniſters to preach "CHRIST JESUS the LORD, and to eſteem "themſelves ſervants of the Churches for "JESUS ſake."

Preaching CHRIST, preaching the Goſpel, preaching the Word, are all ſynonymous terms in *Paul*'s Epiſtles. *Paul* preached the Law as well as the Goſpel; the precept of the Law, and the penalty of the Law. We are *not without law to* GOD, *but under the law to* CHRIST (*o*). There are duties enjoined on the Churches, both as men and Chriſtians; and whether bearing ſpiritual, natural, or civil relations to each other in life,

(*o*) 1 Cor. ix. 21.

life, that they might walk ſo as to pleaſe GOD, and profit men, with which the ſeveral Epiſtles of *Paul* abound. He likewiſe preached the penalty and curſe of the Law. *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them* (*p*). The Law, as a covenant of works broken by ſin, is to be preached to alarm the ſinner, and ſhew him his need of CHRIST, the great Law-fulfiller. *Whatever the law ſaith, it ſaith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before* GOD (*q*); that the guilty conſcience, deſpairing of any righteouſneſs of its own to juſtify it before GOD, might fly to CHRIST for one. The royal Law of Love alſo, as it is the rule of our walk and converſation, ſo it is written anew on regenerate hearts; and from the principle of grace which the Spirit puts within us, and the fulneſs of ſtrength which is treaſured up in CHRIST without us, and communicated from him to us, believers ſerve GOD, not in the oldneſs of the letter, but in the newneſs of the Spirit, not with the bondage of a ſlave, but the liberty of the LORD's freemen. In a word, all doctrines, duties, promiſes, privileges, and ordinances, which the compaſs of our miniſtration takes in, are but ſo many lines drawn from the circle of Goſpel-truths, meeting in CHRIST as their center. Let

(*p*) Gal. iii. 10. (*q*) Rom. iii. 19.

my Brethren therefore candidly bear with me, while I attempt to lay before this Church and auditory a few general and brief ſtrictures upon what it is to preach CHRIST; and then I hope they will ſuffer a word of direction and exhortation, more immediately reſpecting their carriage and behaviour toward him whom they have choſen and ordained to be their ſervant for JESUS ſake.

Doubtleſs this comprehenſive ſubject, Preaching CHRIST, takes in, among other things, theſe four particulars.

The dignity of his perſon. The greatneſs of his undertaking. The nature and number of his offices. And the completeneſs of his ſalvation.

I can give you but a word or two upon each of theſe particulars.

1. We are to preach CHRIST JESUS the LORD, in the dignity of his perſon. He is *the brightneſs of the Father's glory, the expreſs image of his perſon* (*r*). He is GOD *over all, bleſſed for evermore* (*s*). He is in *the form of* GOD, *and thought it no robbery to be equal with* GOD (*t*). *To which of the angels ſaid he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee* (*u*). *Thy throne, O* GOD, *is for ever and ever.*

(*r*) Heb. i. 3.
(*s*) Rom. ix. 5.
(*t*) Phil. ii. 6.
(*u*) Heb. i. 5.

ever (*w*). He is one of the divine Three that bear record in heaven (*x*). We enter upon our viſible profeſſion by a ſolemn dedication to his perſon, when we are baptized into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghoſt: the name is but one, though the perſons are three. He is our Creator, Preſerver, bountiful Benefactor, and Sovereign. The works that the Father doth, theſe the Son doth likewiſe; he has therefore a right to be the object of our worſhip, to claim our beſt obedience, and to be deſired as the center and ſource of our happineſs. *Great is this myſtery of godlineſs*; GOD *was manifeſt in the fleſh* (*y*). Thoſe perſons who make CHRIST JESUS our LORD no more than a God by office, ſnatch at the brighteſt jewel of his crown; and, while they would rob him of his real Deity, they puzzle themſelves no leſs about his humanity; for, leaving the word of truth, and following their own imaginations, they (as one has obſerved) ſtrike out a likeneſs for him to nothing that is to be found in heaven or on earth. He ſhall, with them, be neither a man, nor an angel, but a ſpirit ſuperior to both, what they call a ſuper-angelic Spirit, of which they have given us no certain account, and which the Scripture hath never made the object of our faith. It is a fundamental article in

(*w*) Heb. i 8. (*x*) 1 John v. 7.
(*y*) 1 Tim. iii. 16.

our Creed, that in *the fulneſs of time*, GOD *ſent forth his Son made of a woman* (*z*). *Foraſmuch as the children* [to be redeemed] *were partakers of fleſh and blood, he himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame* (*a*); being in all things made like unto us, ſin only excepted.

2. We are to preach CHRIST JESUS the LORD in the greatneſs of his undertaking; which was to bring many ſons to glory, and, as the Captain of their ſalvation, to be made perfect through ſufferings (*b*). He engaged to reſtore that which he took not away (*c*); *to magnify the law, and make it honourable* (*d*); that *by his obedience to death, even the death of the croſs* (*e*), he might lay in a fund of merit and righteouſneſs which can never be leſſened, though it is always laying out upon the guilty, miſerable, and needy. He was ſet up from everlaſting, called of GOD to the office and work of a Mediator between GOD and men. The elect were choſen in him, given to him, accepted by him. *Grace was given us in* CHRIST JESUS, *before the world began* (*f*). Sin had made a ſurety neceſſary. The Son ſaid, *Lo, I come* (*g*). *The* LORD *laid on him the iniquities of us all* (*h*). Juſtice turned its eye for ſatisfaction on him. The Spirit engaged to fill his human nature with gifts

(*z*) Gal. iv. 4.
(*b*) Heb. ii. 10.
(*d*) Iſa. xlii. 21.
(*f*) 2 Tim. i. 9.
(*h*) Iſa. liii. 6.
(*a*) Heb. ii. 14.
(*c*) Pſalm lxix. 4.
(*e*) Phil. ii. 8.
(*g*) Pſalm xl. 7.

gifts and graces without meaſure. Then righteouſneſs looked down from heaven, for his delights were with the ſons of men. Grace mounts the throne, and *reigns through righteouſneſs unto eternal life by* JESUS CHRIST *our* LORD (*i*). All the perfections of Deity harmonize in him, and in his work. *Mercy and truth meet together* (*k*). The types bore witneſs of him before he was born of the Virgin; and, having fully anſwered their deſign, were laid aſide. We preach to you, that the ſhadows are fled away, and that the ſubſtance is come. *To us a child is born* (*l*), &c. We know that the Son of GOD is come. He hath fulfilled the Law, that we might have ſtrong conſolation by the Goſpel. For what the Law could not do, namely, juſtify the ungodly, the bringing in of a better hope has effected, by which we draw near to GOD; for it is GOD that juſtifies, and that freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in CHRIST JESUS. He puts upon us a righteouſneſs complete, imputes it to us, and it is received by us thro' faith of the operation of GOD. We owe a debt of obedience to the requirements of the Law, and a debt of puniſhment to the juſt demands of the Lawgiver; in both caſes we are inſolvent, therefore GOD *hath made* CHRIST *to be ſin for us* by imputation, *who knew no ſin, that*

(*i*) Rom. v. 21.
(*k*) Pſalm lxxxv. 10.
(*l*) Iſaiah ix. 6.

that we by imputation alſo *might be made the righteouſneſs of* GOD *in him* (*m*). "It is, as "one expreſſes it, the grand fundamental "article of the religion of CHRIST, and the "ground of all our hopes, that he ſuffered "for us, the juſt for the unjuſt, that he "might bring us to GOD; that he not only "died *for our good* (as the *Socinians* ſay, to "ſet us an example how to ſuffer with pa-"tience); but that he died in our room "and ſtead. We do not properly preach "CHRIST, if we conceal *this* moſt eſſential "branch of his mediatorial excellency (*n*)." And when he had by himſelf purged our ſins, and lain in the grave the appointed time, he declared himſelf to be the Son of GOD with power, by his reſurrection from the dead, aſcenſion to heaven, ſeſſion at the right hand of GOD, and the reception and miſſion of the promiſed Spirit. And now he lives, and now he reigns, and ſees the fruit of all his ſufferings. *Whom the heavens muſt receive, until the times of the reſtitution of all things* (*o*). But to proceed,

3. We preach CHRIST JESUS the LORD in the nature of his offices; which are all ſpiritual, and effectual for the ſalvation of the Church: for he *is made of* GOD *unto us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption; that ſo he who glorieth, might glory in the*

(*m*) 2 Cor. v. 21.

(*n*) *Boſtwick's* Self *Diſclaimed, and* CHRIST *Exalted.*

(*o*) Acts iii. 21.

the LORD (*p*). Theſe offices are commonly reckoned thoſe of a Prophet, Prieſt, and King. (1) CHRIST is the great Prophet of the Church, whom *Moſes* (*q*) foretold ſhould come. He diſcharges this office in revealing to us, by his Word and Spirit, the will of GOD for our ſalvation. The blindneſs of our apoſtate minds requires not only that truth be preſented as an object to the eye and ear, but CHRIST muſt make us light in the LORD, and give us the ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation. He is our Counſellor (*r*). As it is written, they ſhall be all taught of GOD (*s*). (2) CHRIST was likewiſe a Prieſt upon his croſs, and is ſo ſtill on his throne. He offered up himſelf an atoning ſacrifice for ſin; he poured out his ſoul unto death, and ſhed his blood for many, for the remiſſion of their ſins, and to reconcile them to GOD. He is the antitype of all the bloody ſacrifices of the legal miniſtry. Without ſhedding of blood, there was no remiſſion (*t*); but his blood cleanſes from all ſin (*u*). It is a fountain open for ſin and for uncleanneſs (*w*). And CHRIST now appears in the preſence of GOD for us, as our Advocate and Interceſſor, *who is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all them that come unto* GOD *by him* (*x*). (3) He

(*p*) 1 Cor. i 30, 31.
(*q*) Deut. xviii. 18.
(*r*) Iſaiah ix. 6.
(*s*) Iſaiah liv. 13.
(*t*) Heb. x. 9, 22.
(*u*) 1 John i. 7.
(*w*) Zech. xiii. 1.
(*x*) Heb. vii. 25.

He is ſet as GOD's King on his holy hill of *Sion*. He has the government of univerſal nature on his ſhoulders, and a power over all fleſh, that he might give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. He ſpoiled principalities and powers on his croſs, and makes to himſelf a willing people now he ſits on his throne. He rules both the world and the church in righteouſneſs, and muſt reign till all enemies are made his footſtool. Antichriſt in every form ſhall truckle at his feet; and he will deſtroy the laſt enemy, Death. Let me obſerve further, that beſides theſe three offices which CHRIST ſuſtains, and ſo effectually executes, there is a variety of metaphors, with which the Word of GOD abounds, all expreſſive of the infinite fulneſs, unbounded grace, and all-ſufficient power of Him, in whom all the promiſes are Yea and Amen. Thus CHRIST is intitled, the Head, and Huſband of the Church; the Shepherd, and Captain of ſalvation; the Foundation, and Chief Corner-ſtone; a Door, a Rock, a ſtrong Hold, and the like, that the poor helpleſs, hopeleſs, guilty, and polluted ſinner may find in him all that he can poſſibly want to make him happy. Once more,

4. and laſtly, In preaching CHRIST, we declare unto you glad tidings, that he hath obtained a complete and eternal redemption for

for us. As for this LORD Redeemer, his work is perfect. Grace will complete what grace begins. There is not only an impetration of the bleſſings of ſalvation for us, but an application of thoſe bleſſings to us. The holy GHOST glorifies CHRIST, by taking of his things, and ſhewing them to us. That divine Agent is equally concerned in our ſalvation with the Father and Son. What he does in it is in purſuance of the eternal plan of Covenant-ſettlements. He ſavingly calls and ſanctifies all, and none but thoſe that are choſen of the Father, and redeemed by the Son. His work is to convince *of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and of judgment* (*y*). CHRIST, the exalted Redeemer, gives *repentance to Iſrael,* as well as *forgiveneſs of ſins* (*z*); which he does by his Spirit. And when the Spirit of grace and ſupplication comes, we look on him whom we have pierced, and mourn (*a*). We are born of the Spirit; we are formed by him to ſhew forth his praiſe: he makes the Saints his temple. Through the word and ordinances he implants, ſtrengthens, and increaſes their graces, and ſubdues their corruptions, till they are made perfect in holineſs, and do immediately paſs into glory; while their bodies, being ſtill united to CHRIST, do reſt in their graves till the reſurrection. *The* LORD *himſelf will deſcend*

 from

(*y*) John xvi. 8—11. (*z*) Acts v. 31.
(*a*) Zech. xii. 10.

from heaven (*b*). He is appointed Judge of all. He ſhall change the vile bodies of his Saints, and faſhion them like to his own moſt glorious body (*c*); *and ſo ſhall we ever be with the* LORD. He will divide to Saints and ſinners their everlaſting portion. In a word, he is *Alpha* and *Omega*; the firſt and the laſt in himſelf, and ſo he muſt be in our preaching of him; nor can we ſpeak of his glory equal to its nature and worth.

Thus I have offered a few things very imperfectly, on a ſubject which is infinite and incomprehenſible, it being concerning Him, in whom all the fulneſs of the Godhead dwells bodily, who is altogether *lovely*, all in all. Nor will it, I hope, be thought an intruding upon the province of my Brother, who is appointed to give, what is commonly called the CHARGE: although I take the freedom alſo to remind you, Brother, that theſe things you have been taught from your youth up. Therefore, as in *Paul*'s charge to *Timothy*, *continue thou in the things which thou haſt learned, and haſt been aſſured of* (*d*). *Preach the word: watch thou in all things* (*e*). *Make full proof of thy miniſtry, that thou mayeſt both ſave thyſelf and them that hear thee* (*f*).

I now proceed to the ſecond part of the text, which I promiſed to ſpeak to; and indeed

(*b*) 1 Theſſ iv. 16.
(*c*) Phil iii. 21.
(*d*) 2 Tim. iii. 14.
(*e*) 2 Tim. iv. 2, 5.
(*f*) 1 Tim. iv. 16.

deed was this to be wholly omitted, the ſervice now allotted me would be eſſentially lame and defective.

I am then to conſider the light in which the Apoſtle viewed his own character, and that of his fellow-Apoſtles and Miniſters. *Your ſervants for* JESUS *ſake.* You remember what was hinted at the beginning of this Diſcourſe, that, by the term *ſervants*, when applied to the Miniſters of the Goſpel, you are not to entertain a mean, degrading idea of them. They are not your Hirelings or your Slaves, nor to be treated with ſupercilious and diſdainful airs, as the manner of ſome is, as though they were ſcarce worthy your notice. They are *your ſervants*, but then their ſervice is according to the nature of their office, ſpiritual; it belongs to the houſe of GOD, the Church of the living GOD. They ſerve you in your beſt intereſts, thoſe of your ſouls. They are CHRIST's ſervants, and yours only for JESUS ſake, on his account, for his glory, and to help you to heaven. They "are called to ſtudy your "weakneſſes and wants, temptations and "dangers; and to labour, by all proper "means, for the relief, and the ſpiritual and "eternal welfare of your ſouls, in love to "CHRIST and you, and in obedience to his "commands, and for advancing his king-"dom and glory among you *(g)*." I deny not

(g) Guyſe in loco.

not but Miniſters ſhould (as they have opportunity and ability) give counſel, advice, and do ſervice to their people, even in temporal concerns: and ſome are bleſſed with ſuch wiſdom, prudence, and forethought in worldly affairs, as to render them capable of helping their people much that way; and faithful loving Miniſters will be very ready to aſſiſt their people by their counſels and prayers, for their temporal good as well as ſpiritual; although this ſhould be done cautiouſly, and but upon urgent occaſions, leſt the applications become too numerous, and the burden on Paſtors too heavy. However this work, which relates more immediately to the ſecular buſineſs of the members of a Church, is a province better ſuited to the office of the Deacons. For, as the late Mr *Bragge* obſerves, "they, that is, the "Deacons, help the Church in temporals, "beyond what the Paſtor can or ought to "do. To go to the Paſtor for advice in "temporals, is to put him upon acting "without or beyond his line; but to go to "an able faithful Deacon, for advice in "ſuch caſes, is to act as CHRIST would "have you. Such as run to the Paſtor for "advice in temporals, may expect a re-"buke; but ſuch as go to the Deacons, may "expect to be both guided and ſucceed-"ed (*b*)."

However,

(*b*) *Bragge's Church Diſcipline*, p. 71.

However, when the Apoſtle in the text ſays, we are *your ſervants for* JESUS *ſake* (*i*), he intends not to diminiſh, but magnify the office. An Ambaſſador is a ſervant to the King whom he repreſents, even while he is repreſenting him; yea, a ſervant to the Commonwealth too, as negotiating her affairs for her. A Steward is a ſervant to the Lord of the houſe, and gives meat to the houſhold; yet is his office honourable, and his perſon reſpectable. But this point needs not to be enlarged on.

We are ſuch kind of ſervants as labour amongſt you, and yet are over you in the LORD, and admoniſh you; and you are called to obey them that have the rule over you, and to ſubmit yourſelves, becauſe they watch for your ſouls, as they that muſt give account; ſee 1 *Theſſ.* v. 1, 12, 13. *Heb.* xiii. 17. This is not making ourſelves of greater importance than the expreſs word of GOD warrants, for all this is *in the* LORD: and, while we ſpeak and act in his name, by his authority, according to his word, and for his glory, your ſpiritual ſubmiſſion and obedience are required by him.

Well then, do you, my Friends, the members of this Church, be pleaſed to ſuffer the word of exhortation. CHRIST, the great Head of the Church, has, we hope, ſent amongſt you one of his willing and faithful

(*i*) Διὰ Ἰησοῦν, Phil. ii. 29.

ful Servants, and you have choſen and ordained him to be your Paſtor, Biſhop, Overſeer, and Guide in the LORD, and in things pertaining to GOD. Now then,

(1) Hold ſuch an one in reputation (*i*). Eſteem him very highly in love for his work's ſake, and be at peace amongſt yourſelves, that you may not grieve him. They that labour in the word and doctrine, are worthy of double honour: "Great civil re-"ſpect, and liberal maintenance (*k*)." His character is ſacred. I hope and pray that the great Head of the Church will furniſh him more and more with humility, grace, and prudence, that may ſecure him from doing any thing beneath his honour; and that you will be very tender of his reputation. When once a Miniſter's character and reputation ſink into contempt in the eyes of a people, farewel to all apparent uſefulneſs and comfort together; for this will occaſion whiſperings, backbitings, ſurmiſes, ſwellings, tumults. *Againſt an elder* (that is, one that is ſo by office, as your Paſtor is) againſt ſuch an one, *receive not an accuſation, but from two or three witneſſes* (*l*). Do not haſtily take up every idle ſtory that ignorance or malice may raiſe and propagate. We are men ſubject to like paſſions and infirmities with yourſelves, and need a mantle of love as well as you.

Let

(*i*) Phil. ii. 29.
(*k*) *Guyſe*'s note in loco.
(*l*) 1 Tim. v. 19.

Let no man deſpiſe his youth; but may he be *an example of the believers in word, in converſation, in ſpirit, in faith, in purity* (*m*)! *Moreover, may he have a good report among them which are without, leſt he fall into reproach, and the ſnare of the devil* (*n*). As to a comfortable proviſion for his ſupport, I hope I need not ſay any thing. You know it is enjoined upon you as your duty, and that by an ordinance of GOD; ſee 1 *Cor.* ix. 14. and I am perſuaded, that thoſe who are niggardly in adminiſtering carnal things, receive but little or no profit from a Miniſter's ſpiritual things.

(2) Receive the Law from your Paſtor's mouth (*o*). I do not mean by it, that your faith ſhould ſtand in the wiſdom of man. You have your Bibles as well as we have; and you would do well to imitate the noble *Bereans*, to *ſearch the ſcriptures* (*p*), &c. A faithful Miniſter of CHRIST is never afraid of his peoples looking too much into their Bibles. What I mean is, be conſtant and conſcientious in attending his miniſtry; and, with reverence and humility, receive the truth in the love of it. I hope his lips will *keep knowledge*, then you may ſeek *the law at his mouth*; *for he is the meſſenger of the* LORD *of hoſts* (*q*). I hope you may expect to hear nothing from him, but what is either expreſly found

(*m*) 1 Tim. iv. 12.
(*n*) 1 Tim. iii. 7.
(*o*) Job xxii. 2.
(*p*) Acts xvii. 11.
(*q*) Mal. ii. 7.

found in the Word, or may by juſt conſequence be derived from it: and therefore whatever doctrines, precepts, promiſes, or privileges may from time to time be the ſubject-matter of his miniſtrations amongſt you, you will receive them with all readineſs of mind; remembering, that *whoſo deſpiſeth the word, ſhall be deſtroyed*; *but* that *he that feareth the commandment, ſhall be rewarded* (*r*). Which reminds me to add,

(3) *Do not forſake the aſſembling of yourſelves together, as the manner of ſome is* (*s*). The LORD's day is eſpecially appropriated for ſtated public worſhip. Wherefore, *remember the ſabbath-day to keep it holy*. On the firſt day of the week the Diſciples firſt ſaw their riſen JESUS; who *ſtood in the midſt of them, and ſaid, Peace be unto you* (*t*). *On the firſt day of the week, the Diſciples came together to break bread* (*u*). *John was in the Spirit on the* LORD's *day* (*w*). You owe this ſacred time to the reſurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead, through whom you are begotten again to a lively hope of immortal glory. Make conſcience of filling up your places in your religious aſſemblies. Watch againſt trifling excuſes for ſhifting off your attendance on them. Theſe excuſes are likely to grow upon you, if you nip them not in the bud,

(*r*) Prov. xiii. 13.
(*s*) Heb. x. 25.
(*t*) Luke xxiv. 36.
(*u*) Acts xx. 7.
(*w*) Rev. i. 10.

bud, and increaſe (if grace prevent not) to more ungodlineſs; even to a total neglect of all divine worſhip and inſtitutions, as hath been the caſe with ſome. Watch againſt itching ears. Do not be fond of novelty, nor of running at the noiſe of every upſtart you may hear of. As your Paſtor, I truſt, will make conſcience of ſtudying and praying, that he may miniſter food and phyſic for your ſouls, ſo do you conſtantly attend his miniſtrations, that his labour may not be in vain to you. But, beſides your LORD's-day ſtated meetings, let me adviſe this Church to be regular in their Church-meetings, there to pray together *in the holy* GHOST, and ſo (as a mean) keep themſelves *in the love of* GOD, *looking for the mercy of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST *unto eternal life* (*x*). Nor do I ſee how the diſcipline of a Church can be maintained without it; and, if once you grow lax in Goſpel-diſcipline, you may expect to decline alſo as to Goſpel-doctrine.

(4) Let every head of a family take up *Joſhua*'s reſolution, *As for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the* LORD (*y*). I hope your families, my Friends, are not prayerleſs ones. It is the ſhame, reproach, and ſin of many profeſſors in our degenerate times, that their houſes are as deſtitute of the worſhip of GOD, as the ſtables of beaſts. But I hope *better*

 things

(*x*) Jude 20, 21. (*y*) Joſh. xxiv. 15.

things of you, and things that accompany ſalvation, though we thus ſpeak (*z*). But I muſt haſten,

(5) *Train up* your children *in the way* they *ſhould go* (*a*). This indeed rather belongs to the former particular, though I make it one by itſelf. You hope to find your children amongſt the ſeed which the LORD hath bleſſed. When you give them up to a covenant-GOD, Father, Son, and holy Spirit, in the ordinance of Baptiſm, you profeſſedly acknowledge they are the LORD's. Is not then his language to you, *Take* theſe children, *and nurſe* them *for me* (*b*)? GOD generally builds up the Church with its ſeed: and I believe it will be found upon cloſe examination, that, though the LORD ſometimes takes *the ſons of the ſtranger that join themſelves to the* LORD, *to ſerve him, and to love the name of the* LORD (*c*); yet that moſt of thoſe that compoſe our Churches can ſay, He was my father's GOD, or my mother's GOD. Seeing then that your children are your growing hopes, labour to cultivate and form their minds and manners to Religion betimes. *Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the* LORD (*d*). They *are by nature children of wrath, even as others.*

(*z*) Heb. vi. 9.
(*b*) Exod. ii. 9.
(*a*) Epheſ. vi. 4.
(*a*) Prov. xxii. 6.
(*c*) Iſa. lvi. 6.

athers (*e*). The firſt *Adam*'s nature is like the ground when it was curſed for man's ſake, of itſelf it brings forth nothing but thorns and thiſtles. You cannot give your children grace. It is the ſecond *Adam* only that can give a new heart, and put his Spirit within them; but for all theſe things he will be ſought unto, and all theſe things they are to be taught from their youth. And I will venture to recommend to you the work of Catechiſing them, nor do I know a better, nay, nor ſo good a form of ſound words for this purpoſe as the *Aſſembly's Catechiſm*; in which I believe your Paſtor will join with *me*, and be ready to aſſiſt *you*.

(6) And laſtly, *Let your converſation be as it becometh the goſpel of* CHRIST (*f*). *Now we live* (ſays the Apoſtle) *if ye ſtand faſt in the* LORD (*g*). *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the preſence of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST *at his coming? for ye are our glory and joy* (*h*)..

Holineſs, Sirs, is the grand end of our preaching, and of your hearing; *for the work of the miniſtry is for the perfecting of the ſaints, for the edifying the body of* CHRIST, *till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of* GOD, *unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs*

(*e*) Epheſ ii. 3.
(*f*) Phil. i. 27.
(*g*) 1 Theſſ iii. 8.
(*h*) 1 Theſſ. ii. 19, 20.

of CHRIST (*i*); that *both he that ſoweth, and they that reap, may rejoice together* (*k*).

I thought to have added a requeſt, in which I doubt not but your Paſtor will join with me, Brethren, *pray for us; for we truſt we have a good conſcience in all things, willing to live honeſtly* (*l*). But I fear I have exceeded already, in point of time, therefore forbear all farther enlargement; only remember, that the foregoing heads of Advice and Exhortation, are given in the words which the holy GHOST teacheth, and which therefore muſt needs deſerve your higheſt regard.

I conclude the whole with my hearty prayer to the GOD of all grace, and to CHRIST JESUS our LORD, the great Head of the Church, that the bleſſing of the LORD may be upon you, and the Paſtor you have choſen. May the LORD furniſh him with yet larger meaſures of gifts and graces to fit him abundantly for the great work he is called to, and hath now undertaken! May he be long ſpared to you, and give growing evidence that he is a workman, that needeth not to be aſhamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, and giving to every one his portion of meat in due ſeaſon! May great and ſignal ſucceſs attend his labours, may ſinners be awakened, converted, and turned to the LORD,

(*i*) Epheſ iv. 12, 13. (*k*) John iv. 36.
(*l*) Heb. xiii. 18.

LORD, and ſaints built up in holineſs and comfort through faith unto ſalvation! *And now, Brethren, I commend you to* GOD, *and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are ſanctified* (*m*). Amen.

(*m*) Acts xx. 32.

THE

THE

CHARGE,

BY THE REVEREND

THOMAS GIBBONS, *D.D.*

A

CHARGE, &c.

Reverend and Dear Brother,

AS it is my province in the ſolemnities of this day to repreſent before you the duties of a Miniſter and Paſtor of a Church of CHRIST, and to enforce them upon you by the moſt powerful motives, and in the warmeſt manner I am able, I ſhall beg your attention to thoſe words which we find upon ſacred record in

1 TIM. IV. 16.

Take heed unto thyſelf, and unto thy doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this, thou ſhalt both ſave thyſelf, and them that hear thee.

THESE words are a part of the ſacred charge which the Apoſtle *Paul* gave to *Timothy*, his beloved friend and fellow-labourer in the Goſpel of JESUS

CHRIST. But though the charge was addreſſed only to *Timothy*, yet it may well be regarded as a charge directed to every Miniſter of the Word in the ſeveral generations of mankind. All Miniſters of the Goſpel ought to be conformed to the model which St *Paul* here exhibits; and the ſame graces and virtues, ſpiritual employments and labours, which were to form the character of *Timothy*, ought to be the glorious conſtituents of our characters in theſe diſtant periods of time. As our LORD, the Founder of our Religion, and the perfect Pattern of Holineſs, is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever; as the Goſpel which we preach is the ſame Goſpel which was preached in the days of CHRIST, and his Apoſtles, and bears upon it the immutable glories of its immutable Author, and as the ſtates and intereſts of ſouls are of the ſame nature and importance now that they were ſeventeen hundred years ago, ſo the qualifications, the devotion, zeal, integrity, and univerſal holineſs of Miniſters ſhould be the ſame now which they were in former days. And, bleſſed be GOD, that, as the reſidue of the Spirit is with him, and as that immenſe fulneſs of divine life and influence is not and cannot be exhauſted, ſo that we in theſe laſt ages of the world may hope for the communication of the ſame grace to ſanctify, eſtabliſh, and comfort our minds, and qualify us for the honourable

honourable and ſucceſsful diſcharge of our miniſtry on earth, and the gracious acceptance and reward of our faithful, though feeble endeavours in our Maſter's cauſe in the world of glory. Think not then, my Brother, while I am addreſſing you in theſe words of the Apoſtle, who wrote under the inſpiration of the holy and unerring Spirit, *Take heed unto thyſelf, and unto thy doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this, thou ſhalt both ſave thyſelf, and them that hear thee*; that you are hearing the charge of one of the common ſervants of JESUS CHRIST, but that you are attending to the voice of the great Saviour and King of his Church, thus ſpeaking to you from his own oracle; and with an authority that ought to be reverentially regarded, and moſt readily obeyed.

In treating upon this paſſage, I ſhall,

I. Conſider the duty here enjoined. *Take heed unto thyſelf and unto thy doctrine; continue in them.* And,

II. I ſhall repreſent the motives to your duty. *For in doing this, thou ſhalt both ſave thyſelf, and them that hear thee.*

I. I ſhall conſider the duty here enjoined. *Take heed unto thyſelf, and unto thy doctrine; continue in them.*

(1) You are exhorted to *take heed*. "The "word, ſays *Stockius* (*a*), in his examination "of it, generally, and as applied in its proper "force, ſignifies, *to reſtrain*, or *keep back*, but, "when taken particularly, it ſignifies *to ſtop*, "or *ſtand ſtill*, becauſe he who *ſtops* or *ſtands* "*ſtill*, muſt *reſtrain* or *keep back* his ſteps and "courſe. So the word is uſed, *Acts* xix. 22. "where it is ſaid, *Paul ſtayed* in *Aſia* for a "ſeaſon. *Metonymically*, the word is ap- "plied to ſuch things as require delay, or "which are and ought to be done, and are "wont to be done with delay. And thus "the word denotes, in the firſt place, *to look* "*intently at any thing, or to turn our eyes to* "*any thing, and fix them upon ſome object be-* "*fore us.* As *Luke* xiv. 7. our LORD is ſaid "*to mark* how they choſe out the chief "rooms; and *Acts* iii. 5. the lame man, "who lay at the gate of the temple, when "*Peter* and *John* bid him look on them, is ſaid

(*a*) Generatim & vi vocis notat inhibere. Speciatim notat morari, ſubſiſtere, quia, qui moratur & ſubſiſtit alicubi, greſſum & curſum inhibeat, neceſſe eſt. Ita vero legitur, *Act.* xix. 22. Metonymicè dicitur de iis, quæ moram poſcunt, vel cum mora quadam fiunt, fierique debent ac ſolent. Hinc notat (1) Intentis oculis aſpicere aliquid, vel oculos ad aliquid vertere, & quaſi in re adverſa defixos habere, *Luc.* xiv. 7. *Act.* iii. 5. (2) Omni animi contentione & cura attendere ad aliquid, vel alicui rei. Ita *Paulus Timotheum* attendere jubet, tum ſibi ipſi, ne fiat vita ejus ſcandaloſa, tum doctrinæ veritatis, ne puritatem verbi amittat, 1 *Tim.* iv. 16. *Stockius* in verb. Επεχω, quod hic occurrit. Intentus eſto, *Beza*. Animum attende tibi ipſi quomodo vivas, & doctrinæ, quid doceas. *Gratius.*

" ſaid to *have given heed* unto them, expect-
" ing to receive ſomething from them. And
" in the ſecond place, the word ſignifies *to*
" *attend to ſomething*, or *ſome buſineſs, with all*
" *care and earneſtneſs of mind*; and thus, adds
" the above-mentioned Critic, the Apoſtle
" *Paul* commands *Timothy*, 1 Tim. iv. 16. to
" attend to himſelf, that there might be no
" blemiſh in his life, and to the doctrine of
" truth, that it might be pure from all cor-
" rupt mixtures." Take heed then, my Brother; fix your regard upon yourſelf, and upon your doctrine. You are not to glance your thoughts upon yourſelf, and upon your doctrine ſuperficially, but you are deeply and thoroughly to examine yourſelf, and the meſſages you deliver in the name of the LORD to others: nor are you to glance your thoughts upon yourſelf and your doctrine only occaſionally, but you are to make them the frequent, and indeed the daily objects of your contemplation. Not the archer is more ſteadily to eye the mark at which he is to ſhoot, than you are to obſerve your own ſoul, and what manner of doctrine it is you preach to your people. You cannot be too much concerned about the purity of the veſſel, and the nature of its contents. And, O! that you may always impart to others, having firſt found your own ſoul quickened and refreſhed by it, that wine *that chears both*

GOD

GOD *and man* (*b*)! While other Miniſters in a vain curioſity are employing their views upon the Vineyards of others, do you attend to your own, and to what kind of fruits are growing there, for nothing can more deſerve your vigilant and perpetual regard, or will turn out to a better account in the day of the LORD. But I may be preventing what may be more properly offered under the remaining particulars.

(2) You are to take heed, or carefully attend to yourſelf. *Take heed*, ſays the Apoſtle, *unto thyſelf.*

1. Take heed, or carefully attend, my dear Brother, to your views and deſigns. If our views and deſigns are not right, nothing is right. Our prayers, our preaching, and all our ſervices are worſe than vain, if ourſelves, our own worldly emolument, or the applauſes of mankind are the ruling motives of our miniſtry. *Sinful ſelf*, our own advantage, or our own honour, is not to be the principle upon which we act in the courſe of our work, but it is ever to be accounted, and ever to be watched againſt as the deadly enemy of our ſouls. If we are ſeeking to enrich, or exalt ourſelves, we are not the faithful ſervants of JESUS CHRIST. Worldlineſs and pride, like worms at the root of our miniſtrations, will devour the life and ſpirituality

(*b*) Judges ix. 13.

lity of thoſe duties that may ſeem moſt beautiful in our own eyes and the eyes of others. *Though I ſpeak*, ſays the Apoſtle, *with the tongues of men and of angels*, though I could ſpeak in all the languages on earth, and in the ſublime ſtrains of angels, *and have not charity*, love to GOD and CHRIST, and love to ſouls, *I am become as ſounding braſs or a tinkling cymbal* (*c*). I grant that we may find it hard, at ſome times more eſpecially, to determine what are our governing aims, ſuch is the myſterious intricacy, and ſuch are the ſtrange diſorders of our ſpirits, but a few ſuch queſtions as theſe, frequently and cloſely urged home upon our conſciences, may enable us to diſcover what are the prevailing ſprings of action in our miniſtry. What pleaſes me moſt? Are they the converſion, progreſs, and conſolation of ſouls in the good ways of the LORD? What grieves me moſt? Is it the little ſucceſs of my labours, or the little piety and divine proficiency I diſcern in the Church and Congregation among which I miniſter? Can I forego an hour of civil friendſhip, or philoſophical and polite amuſement to viſit a Chriſtian, and hear him relate the experiences of his ſoul, it may be, in broken accents, and in circumſtances of the greateſt worldly meanneſs and poverty? Can I hazard, nay, even ſacrifice my own eaſe, and put a violence upon my own natural

(*c*) 1 Cor. xiii. 1.

tural inclinations to adminiſter a ſeaſonable rebuke againſt ſin? Can I rejoice to hear that the work of GOD proſpers, and bleſs his name with all my ſoul for it, though another, and not myſelf, is the honoured inſtrument? Do I look up for divine aſſiſtance to direct me to the moſt ſeaſonable and uſeful ſubjects? Do I endeavour to mould my Diſcourſes, ſo as to penetrate the conſcience, or comfort a mourner in *Zion*, rather than excite the admiration, and raiſe the applauſes of the polite and learned? Am I more pleaſed to find that perſons go away from the Houſe of GOD with thoughtful, penſive countenances, ſaying nothing, it may be, to their neighbours, but evidently revolving what they have heard in their minds, than to hear my own praiſes, and the epithets of Learned and Ingenious beſtowed upon my Sermons? Do I preach thoſe truths, which I apprehend in my conſcience my people need moſt, and not what will be moſt palatable to them? Am I not afraid of the faces of men, and can I boldly venture upon their diſpleaſure and frowns, that I may do their ſouls good, be faithful to my truſt, and be clear from the blood of all? And finally, Do I make the caſes of my people my own, in a kind of paternal ſympathy and affection, and do I carry their ſpiritual intereſts into my cloſet, and wreſtle with GOD on their behalf, as I would for my own ſoul? — A good anſwer

to ſuch inquiries will ſhew us, that we are influenced by right motives, and that we are not governed by worldly emoluments, or the breath of human applauſe, but that we honeſtly and heartily ſeek the glory of our GOD and Saviour, and the profit and ſalvation of ſouls. If theſe are the ſprings of our conduct, we may truly ſay to our people, that we ſeek not *theirs*, but *them*.

2. Take heed to yourſelf, my Brother, as to your experiences. Often look within, and attend to what are your own doubts and difficulties, temptations and dangers, trials and ſupports, declenſions and improvements. Survey alſo the divine diſpenſations towards you, and not only obſerve them, but lay them up as treaſures for future uſe, and that not only for yourſelf, though in this view a recollection of them may be very advantageous, but for the benefit of others. Some paſſage or line of our own experience, ſome proceeding of GOD towards us may find a place in our Sermons, or may be recited in our converſes with Chriſtians in ſimilar circumſtances, who perhaps, when they hear how we have been exerciſed, will not only receive a ſatisfactory evidence of our fitneſs to teach others, but be comforted that they are not alone in their experiences, or the diſpenſations of GOD towards them. *Job*, *David*, *Iſaiah*, *Jeremiah*, and the Apoſtle *Paul*, have recorded the divine conduct towards

them, and have laid open the interior of their ſouls; nay, the exerciſes of our LORD's mind as man have been tranſmitted to us by the Evangeliſts, and were the experiences of the cloud of witneſſes gone before us to glory wanting from our Bibles, not only would a great, but a moſt valuable part of the Scriptures be withheld from us. As face anſwers face in a glaſs, ſo do the inward frame and exerciſes of one child of GOD anſwer thoſe of another. As we preach for our people, ſo we may alſo live, we may be diſciplined of Heaven for our people. *And whether we be afflicted, it is for your conſolation and ſalvation: or whether we be comforted, it is for your conſolation and ſalvation* (*d*).

3. Take heed to yourſelves, dear Sir, as to your private duties. The whole of Religion by no means lies open to the view of the world. Be often in your cloſet, and there, not only by laborious meditation and ſtudy prepare for your miniſtrations on the LORD's day, but pour out your heart at the mercy-ſeat for your own ſpiritual life and growth, and for the ſpiritual life and growth of the ſouls that attend upon you. In your private retirements ſpread before GOD the diſmal and deplorable conditions of the impenitent and incorrigible, of the ſtupid and profane, and, if any ſuch ſhould be found among your

(*d*) 2 Cor. i. 6.

your Auditory, of the painted Hypocrite and frozen Formaliſt. Commend alſo to the Father of mercies and the GOD of all conſolation the various caſes of the timorous and doubtful, of the languid and declining, of the convinced and alarmed Sinner, and of the lively and growing Chriſtian. Let the lambs that you dedicate to GOD, the offspring of his people, in their dangerous ſtages of childhood and youth, and let the aged and infirm, ſuch as are in the ſuburbs of the dark valley, and on the threſhold of eternity, find a place in your remembrance at the throne of mercy. Such a ſpirit and conduct will prove you to be a true Overſeer and faithful Shepherd of the flock. And what if I further recommend it to you, my dear Brother, ſometimes to ſet apart whole days for Faſting and Prayer for inquiry into the ſtate of your own ſoul, for the particular and affectionate repreſentation before GOD of the ſeveral caſes of your people, and for the bleſſing of ſucceſs to be commanded upon your miniſtry? I am certain, you will not find ſuch days as theſe miſſpent; and, though their luſtre may be veiled from men on earth, yet they will ſhine bright in the eyes of the LORD, your great Maſter, and your gracious Rewarder.

4. Take heed to yourſelf, my Brother, as to your converſation. *Let no man*, ſays the Apoſtle to *Timothy*, in the 12th verſe of the

chapter of our text, *deſpiſe thy youth*; that is, let no man have cauſe to deſpiſe thy youth, thy youth in years being a maturity, an old age in grace and holineſs; *but be thou an example of the believers in word, in converſation*, &c. You will be called to make your viſits to your people. Sometimes they will be viſits to the afflicted, to the ſick, and to the dying. In theſe caſes, your Diſcourſes ſhould be ſpiritual and ſavoury, and every word you ſpeak ſhould be filled with ſomething weighty and ſolid, ſomething ſuitable and pertinent to their ſtate. At other times you will be called to viſits of friendſhip; and, though you undoubtedly may indulge to converſation upon learned, political, or innocently entertaining ſubjects, yet remember that you are a Miniſter of JESUS CHRIST, even in your moments of relaxation, and quit not your company without ſpeaking ſomething that may tend to uſefulneſs. Be ſolicitous to find an opportunity of ſtriking a divine ſpark: if it is encouraged, you may have the pleaſure of ſeeing it increaſe into a celeſtial flame, that may warm and refreſh both you and your friends; and if it ſhould drop and die, yet ſtill you will have the ſatisfaction of performing your duty, and adorning your ſacred character. However, take heed to your converſation, that nothing unſavoury or vain proceeds out of your mouth. Endeavour that not one ſentence,

not

not one word in the freeſt liberty you indulge, ſhould be ever ſo much eſtranged from Religion, as to forbid your eaſy and ready, and, may I ſo expreſs myſelf, your graceful return into Diſcourſes upon holy and heavenly ſubjects. Let your very chearfulneſs be the offspring of Religion, and have ſomething in it that ſhews you to be a Chriſtian, or at leaſt that you are not unworthy of this high and ſacred name, tho' it manifeſts at the ſame time that you are a comfortable and happy Chriſtian, and that celeſtial radiance, and not melancholy gloom is the attire of true Godlineſs. Above all things, guard your converſation from every thing that looks like tale-bearing, buſy curioſity into other mens affairs, impertinent ſcrutinies into other perſons characters, and moſt of all from wanton and heavy cenſures upon your neighbours. Ever remember that the ſins and follies of others call for our compaſſion and prayers, and not for invective and ridicule, and that a pious groan or ſigh over the miſcarriages of our fellow-creatures will be approved by GOD, when malignant aggravations, poignant ſatires, and raſh and groundleſs calumny will be abhorred and reſented by him. There is a ſin, but how little is it apprehended and watched againſt as ſuch, and how free and unreſtrained is its range, and might I not add its ravage among men, I

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mean that ſin which ariſes from unchriſtian, inhuman treatment of the ſins of others? Once more,

5. And laſtly, Take heed to yourſelf, my dear Brother, as to your conduct in the world. See to it that as to Juſtice, Truth, Temperance, Meekneſs, Forgiveneſs, Benevolence, and every other amiable and ſocial virtue, that it not only is found in you, but that it ſhines with an unſullied and powerful luſtre in your example. Theſe ornaments, ornaments did I ſay? theſe conſtituents, theſe eſſentials of our holy Religion ſhould adorn every Chriſtian, but they ſhould ſparkle, like gems of the firſt magnitude and glory, in the lives of Miniſters. Let the tenor of your conduct be a practical rebuke upon all immorality and profaneneſs, upon all intemperance and impurity, upon all perverſeneſs and contention, and upon all ſordid ſelfiſhneſs, and unfeeling neglect of the troubles and diſtreſſes of mankind, and eſpecially of your fellow-Chriſtians. Keep guard againſt the appearances of evil, and avoid every thing that is not of good report; and rather deny yourſelf in any liberty that you may think lawful, if there is any danger by taking it of offending your brother, or of giving the leaſt occaſion of reproach, or encouragement to iniquity in the licentious and profane. Let your Study, your Pulpit, your Viſits to your people,

people, and your Meetings for godly Edification and ſocial Prayer, be your delight; and be aſſured, that an holy walk before GOD and man will not only amply recompenſe for its ſelf-denials in the end, but that it is deſirable even in itſelf; and that every path, and every ſtep in that path is crowned with pleaſantneſs and peace.

(3) I proceed to ſhew you, my Brother, that you are alſo to take heed to your doctrine. *Take heed*, ſays the Apoſtle, *to thyſelf, and unto thy doctrine.* And let me mention theſe ſeveral reſpects in which you are to take heed to your doctrine.

1. Take heed that your doctrine be pure and uncorrupted. The Apoſtle exhorts *Timothy* to *hold faſt the form of ſound words* (*e*). And he bids *Titus ſpeak the things which become ſound doctrine* (*f*). And in the ſame chapter he directs him *in doctrine to ſhew uncorruptneſs, gravity, ſincerity, ſound ſpeech that cannot be condemned* (*g*). Ever reverence and conſult your Bible, and from that pure and divine fountain derive thoſe doctrines you communicate to others: and when you preſs a truth, let it be ſupported by the warrant and authority of Scripture, which is nothing other than the warrant and authority of GOD himſelf. And when you have

(*e*) 2 Tim. i. 13. (*f*) Titus ii. 1.
(*g*) Titus ii. 7, 8.

have the ſacred Oracles on your ſide, fear not the prejudices, partialities, and oppoſitions of men in the declaration of what you are ſatisfied upon careful inquiry is the counſel and will of Heaven, being aſſured that your Maſter will glorioufly reward your fidelity to his truth and intereſt, and that the applauſe, *Well done, good and faithful ſervant*, will drown all the cenſures and clamours that you may ſuffer for the free and open publication of the Goſpel of which you are made a Miniſter.

2. Take heed that your doctrine be plain and expreſs. Never ſeek to hide your meaning, but declare frankly and fully what you apprehend to be eſſential and neceſſary truths. See an excellent pattern of this kind, which you will do well to keep in view, and always imitate. *Therefore*, ſays the Apoſtle *Paul*, *ſeeing we have this miniſtry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of diſhoneſty, not walking in craftineſs, nor handling the word of* GOD *deceitfully, but, by manifeſtation of the truth, we commend ourſelves to every man's conſcience in the ſight of* GOD (*b*). And the ſame Apoſtle tells the Elders of the Church at *Epheſus*, that he had *kept back nothing that was profitable unto them* (*i*). To give an inſtance of this ſort. Never ſcruple to open, as

(*b*) 2 Cor. iv. 1, 2. (*i*) Acts xx. 20.

as it were, the ſecret place of divine thunder, to ſhew ſinners the treaſures of almighty vengeance, and faithfully to explain and enforce the law of GOD, not only in its external obſervation, but in its inward ſpirituality, extent, and power, and the curſes with which it is armed againſt all diſobedience, and unrighteouſneſs of men. Seek not curious and refined, but forcible and pathetic language, and willingly ſacrifice the nicer beauties and arrangements of compoſition to the freedoms of a bold, abrupt, and animated addreſs, if you may but hereby have the hopes of ſending an Arrow of Conviction into the heart of ſome poor ſtupid ſinner, and by ſetting hell and all its horrors before him ſhew him his danger, make him cry out for ſalvation, and give him no reſt till he has laid hold on CHRIST, and is in the road to Heaven. Our LORD *taught as one having authority, and not as the Scribes* (*k*).

3. And laſtly, Take heed to your Doctrine that it be entire and perfect. Let it never with any juſtice be ſaid or thought of you, that you preach one part of your Bible, but that you ſuppreſs or ſhew but little regard to another. All the Word of GOD is profitable, and is to be preached in its ſeaſon. *All Scripture is given by inſpiration of* GOD, *and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,*

(*k*) Matt. vii. 29.

correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs; that the man of GOD *may be perfect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works* (*l*). On the one hand, do not ſo much diſplay the promiſes, privileges, and bleſſings of the Covenant of Grace, as to neglect to inſiſt upon the Precepts of the divine Word, the neceſſity of the New-Birth, or the implantation of an holy and heavenly Nature, and the various duties incumbent upon Chriſtians both towards GOD and towards man. And on the other hand, dwell not ſo perpetually upon the commands and duties enjoined in the Scriptures as to ſhut out divine Grace, and the exceeding great and precious promiſes of the Goſpel. When you open the conſolation of an heavenly doctrine or promiſe, ſhew that it is an incentive to our love to GOD and CHRIST, and that its bleſſings with a powerful irreſiſtible energy command and challenge our obedience. And when you conſider the extent and enforce the obligations to Holineſs, unfold the riches of divine mercy, not only to win the heart to holineſs, but to ſhew your people where their ſtrength lies for its performance, not in themſelves, but in that GOD who *works in us both to will and to do of his good pleaſure* (*m*). In every Sermon let the name of JESUS, ſomething of his Perſon, his Atonement, his

(*l*) 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. (*m*) Phil. ii. 13.

his Mediation, his Spirit, and his Promiſes be poured out as a ſweet perfume; and in every Sermon ſhew that you are deſirous that ſouls may bow to CHRIST as their Leader, Lawgiver, and Sovereign, and that *the grace of* GOD *that brings ſalvation, teaches us, that, denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in the preſent world, looking for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great* GOD *and our Saviour* JESUS CHRIST; *who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works* (*n*). The Goſpel is a large, harmonious, incomparable ſyſtem of Grace and Holineſs, enriched with Grace, and irradiated with Holineſs. Let this Goſpel be the model of your miniſtrations; and thus will your Diſcourſes, inſtead of evaporating into enthuſiaſtic rhapſody, or degenerating into dry and cold morals, little better than thoſe of Pagan philoſophy, be *baptized with the holy* GHOST, *and with fire* (*o*). *Shun not to declare the whole counſel of* GOD (*p*).

(4) And laſtly, I proceed to obſerve, my dear Brother, that you are not only to *take heed to yourſelf, and to your doctrine*, but to *continue in them*. *Take heed*, ſays the Apoſtle to *Timothy, to thyſelf, and to thy doctrine; continue*, or perſevere *in them*.

(*n*) Titus ii. 11—14.
(*o*) Matt. iii. 11.
(*p*) Acts xx. 27.

But it may be aſked, In what does the Apoſtle exhort *Timothy* to continue or perſevere, when he ſays, *Take heed to thyſelf, and to thy doctrine, continue in them?* It may not be ſo eaſy to conceive how the Apoſtle ſhould adviſe *Timothy* to continue in himſelf, though it may be eaſy to conceive how he ſhould adviſe him to continue in his doctrine.

Suppoſe then that the Apoſtle refers not to *Timothy*'s ſelf or doctrine, or not to theſe or any one of theſe only, but alſo to the graces and duties he had been but juſt before recommending to *Timothy*. *Continue in them:* that is, ſays Dr *Whitby* upon the place, "continue in the exerciſes mentioned *verſes* "12. and 13." But what and if we extend the directions, *continue in them*, to a larger compaſs, and take in all that the Apoſtle had been enjoining *Timothy*, in the verſes that lie near our text (*q*)?

Let me then, my Brother, according to the example of the Apoſtle, if we conſider our text in the view I have placed it, exhort you to continue or perſevere in them, that is, in the graces and duties the Apoſtle had been juſt before inculcating. *Continue in them*; that is, *ver.* 12. *be thou a conſtant example to believers*, not only to the world, but to Chriſtians

(*q*) "*Continue in them.* This hath a relation, as it appears "unto *ver.* 12. and 15. as well as unto the preceding part of "this verſe." See a valuable Sermon upon theſe words in *The Continuation of the Morning-exerciſe.*

tians themſelves, ſhining like a ſtar of the firſt magnitude, and with a ſnperlative glory in the hemiſphere of the Church; in *word*, in the holy advices and counſels you give them; *in converſation*, in the free converſes of your viſits of friendſhip; *in charity*, in pure and ardent love towards GOD, and warm and generous love towards men; *in ſpirit*, in ſpiritual-mindedneſs, an abſtraction from this world, and a divine tendency towards a better, or in lively zeal and fervor for the glory of GOD, and the good of ſouls; in *faith*, in a cordial belief of the truths of the Goſpel, in an unſhaken dependence upon CHRIST, and in a fixed and ſteady regard to the future glory; and *in purity*, in an abſtinence from every thing that may defile your mind and conſcience, and may bring a cloud of reproach upon the holy name by which you are called, and the holy character you ſuſtain. Further, ſays the Apoſtle, *ver.* 13. *Till I come, give attendance to reading*; I would rather ſay, till the LORD ſhall come, or till the day in which he ſhall call you to himſelf, *give attendance to reading*; reading the holy Scriptures, and making ſtill deeper reſearches into thoſe inexhauſtible mines of wiſdom and grace, and reading whatever Writings beſides may tend to promote and enlarge your miniſterial furniture, and make you a Scribe better inſtructed in the myſteries of the kingdom of Heaven:

ven: *to exhortation*, to public exhortation, and exhortation from houſe to houſe, and ſoul to ſoul. General exhortations may be like the bow drawn at a venture, but particular perſonal exhortations may be like an arrow aimed at a ſingle mark, and may therefore be more likely to do good. The Apoſtle adds, *give attendance to doctrine*; that is, ſtudy the doctrines of the divine Word, live upon them yourſelf, and impart them with all readineſs and freedom for the inſtruction and comfort of others. *Neglect not the gift that is in thee*, ver. 14. Cultivate and exerciſe the abilities with which you are furniſhed, and which you are ever to conſider as the gift of God to you; the talents which are to be ſacred to his glory. Let not your powers be ſuffered to gather ruſt, but exert them to the uttermoſt, for they will at once brighten and increaſe by conſtant employment and uſe. *Meditate upon theſe things*, ver. 15. Revolve theſe things in your mind, and often conſider their importance and excellency. *Give thyſelf wholly to them:* make, as it were, a dedication of yourſelf to them. Let nothing divert and eſtrange you from ſuch a courſe, or obſtruct and damp you in it. Let ſuch a life as that I have repreſented employed in this manner, adorned with theſe graces, and enriched with theſe duties, be your principal concern and care, and engage and center in itſelf all

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the inclinations, purpoſes, and exerciſes of your ſoul. Be at leiſure for nothing elſe. Let worldly and inferior things be as much beneath your firſt and chief regard, as they are beneath the holy and heavenly character you wear, that of the Servant of JESUS CHRIST. *That thy profiting*, adds the Apoſtle, *may appear to all*; that the people among whom you labour may with pleaſure behold your divine progreſs, and that your path in life may be like that of the light of the morning, that in the eye of all, and in bleſſing to all, ſhines more and more to a perfect day. And thus are introduced the words of the text, *Take heed unto thyſelf, and unto thy doctrine*, carefully attend to thyſelf, and to the doctrine which thou preacheſt; *continue in them*, in all theſe holy and excellent things which I have been enumerating and recommending. Having entered upon ſuch a life as this, continue in it. Let not your affections languiſh, and your feet grow weary in ſuch a divine courſe. Hold on your way, and break through all oppoſing difficulties, temptations, and dangers. Go not from ſtrength to wearineſs, the caſe with common travellers, but from ſtrength to ſtrength. You are in a right path. It is the path which your LORD himſelf trod; it is a path of inward, if not of outward peace; and it is a path that perſevered in will bring you to the prize of the high call-

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ing of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, to the crown of glory that fades not away. Turn not from it either to the right hand, or to the left. Let nothing move you from your purpoſe and purſuit; neither *count your life dear unto yourſelf, ſo that you may finiſh your courſe with joy, and the miniſtry which you have received of the* LORD JESUS, *to teſtify the goſpel of the grace of* GOD (*r*). Let increaſing days bear witneſs to your increaſing ſtrength and vigour in the exerciſes of the divine life, and the faithful and zealous diſcharge of the duties of your holy vocation. *Be ſtedfaſt*, let nothing unhinge your determinations for ſuch a bleſſed life as this; *be immoveable*, be not ſo much as ſhaken in mind, but ſtand firm and collected in the grace that is in CHRIST JESUS, to be and to do according to what has been now preſſed upon you, not unlike a rock in the ocean, that ſtands unmoved amidſt the weight of waters, and turbulence of ſtorms, and diſappoints and outbraves them all. And *be you always abounding in the work of the* LORD, not only do the work of a Miniſter, but abound in it, and crowd, crowd your time with as much duty as poſſible for GOD and your generation; *foraſmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the* LORD (*s*). And thus, my Brother, I have particularly conſidered the ſeveral branches

(*r*) Acts xx. 24. (*s*) 1 Cor. xv. 58.

branches of duty which the Apoſtle enjoins upon *Timothy*, and not only upon him, but upon all the Miniſters of JESUS CHRIST in all ages, *Take heed unto thyſelf, and unto thy doctrine; continue in them.* It remains, dear Sir,

II. That I repreſent to you the motives to your duty. *For in doing this, thou ſhalt both ſave thyſelf, and them that hear thee.*

You need not be cautioned againſt any conceptions of this paſſage, as if your paſtoral office, thus honourably and uſefully diſcharged, was to be the baſis of your juſtification before GOD; for the mercy of GOD, as vouchſafed through JESUS CHRIST, our only and all ſufficient Saviour and Mediator, is the proper ground, as you have declared to us, of our forgiveneſs and acceptance with GOD unto eternal life. I am perſuaded alſo, that I need not guard you againſt any imagination that your pious inſtructions, admonitions, labours, and example as a Miniſter, will be the real cauſes of the ſalvation of your people, for we are abundantly taught from Scripture, according to what you alſo have witneſſed in your Confeſſion, that it is more powerful breath than that of your own, even the breath of the Almighty, that both raiſes ſouls from their death in treſpaſſes and ſins, and that enables them more and more to die unto ſin

and live unto righteouſneſs (*t*). The meaning of the Apoſtle then may be, that in the faithful,

(*t*) The remarks of *Beza* upon this paſſage appear to me very juſt, and quite harmonious with Scripture. "*Thou ſhalt* "*ſave.* Faith comes by Hearing, and Hearing by Preaching. "And ſo far Miniſters of the Goſpel, to whom GOD has given "the Word of Reconciliation, are ſaid to ſave both themſelves "and thoſe who hear them, when he, who acts by them, is con- "ſidered as joining together with them. On the other hand, "as often as Miniſters are compared with GOD, that expreſ- "ſion of *Paul* is true, that neither is he that plants any thing, "neither he that waters, but GOD that gives the increaſe."

"Servabis, σωσεις. Fides eſt ex auditu, auditus verò ex "prædicatione. Hactenus igitur & ſeſe & alios *ſervare* di- "cuntur miniſtri verbi, in quibus Dominus poſuit reconcilia- "tionis ſermonem, cùm videlicet unà cum illis conjungitur is "qui per eos agit. At contra, quoties miniſtri cum Domini "conferuntur, valet illud *Pauli*, Qui plantat, & qui rigat, nihil "eſt." *Beza* in loc.

The note alſo of *Grotius* upon the words is worthy of obſervation. "It is no new thing to attribute in a certain ſubor- "dinate ſenſe thoſe words which by the higheſt title belong to "GOD or CHRIST— Thus to ſave and to convert are applied "to men, *Rom.* xi. 14. and *Luke* i. 16."

"Non novum eſt verba quæ Deo ſummo jure competunt, "aut Chriſto, ſenſu quodam ſubordinato tribui hominibus — "Sic item hoc σωζειν (ſalvum facere) hominibus tribuitur, "*Rom* xi. 14. ſic & επιστρεφειν (convertere) *Luc.* i. 16." *Grot.* in loc.

"We ſhould dread to think," ſays Mr *Hoadly*, in a Sermon upon the latter part of our text, "of uſurping the title and "office of the great *Emanuel*, the Saviour, who is therefore "called JESUS, becauſe he was to ſave his people from their "ſins, *Matt* i. 21. yet there is a ſenſe wherein the ſaving act "and power are otherwiſe and variouſly aſcribed. Sometimes "to Faith, *Luke* vii. 50. *Thy faith hath ſaved thee.* Sometimes "to Hope. We are ſaved by hope, *Rom.* viii. 24. Sometimes "to Baptiſm, 1 *Pet.* iii 21. Baptiſm alſo doth now ſave us, "not the putting away the filth of the fleſh, *&c.* Sometimes "to huſbands and wives in reference to one another, 1 *Cor.*

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faithful, fervent, and uniform diſcharge of his duty, according to what has been repreſented, a Miniſter will certainly attain his own ſalvation. *Doing this* (*u*), not for *doing this, thou ſhalt both ſave thyſelf, and them that hear thee.* Theſe fruits of lively active Godlineſs prove the reality and excellency of our Faith, and it is by Faith uniting our ſouls to CHRIST that we are put into the poſſeſſion of the exceeding great and precious promiſes of the new and everlaſting Covenant, or *the ſalvation which is in* JESUS CHRIST *with eternal glory* (*w*). A Miniſter therefore that thus takes heed to himſelf and to his doctrine, and continues in ſuch a courſe of ſacred labour and zeal for GOD and his glory, as the Apoſtle recommends, may be as certain of ſalvation in purſuing ſuch a manner of life, as if his everlaſting happineſs was

 deſerved

" vii. 16. So is the Goſpel called the goſpel of our ſalvation, " *Eph.* i. 13. And to you is the word of this ſalvation ſent, " *Acts* xiii. 26. So we are exhorted to ſave ourſelves, *Acts* ii. " 40. And others, *Jude* 23. ſave with fear. Thus in lower " matters is the act of writing, for inſtance, aſcribed to the " pen, to the hand that uſes it, and to the writer himſelf that " moves both; and we have no difficulty to underſtand theſe " different forms of ſpeech. Nor is there a greater difficulty " in the preſent caſe, ſo to aſcribe to the creature the low ſub- " ordinate agency, which in diſtinct capacities may belong to " it, as in the mean time to reſerve to GOD and CHRIST the " ſupreme agency, which is moſt peculiar and appropriate to " divine power and grace, 1 *Pet.* i 5. *Eph.* ii. 8." *Howe's Funeral Sermon* on the Death of the Rev. Mr *Matthew Mead*, Folio Works, vol. ii. p. 463.

(*u*) Ταῦτα ποιῶν. (*w*) 2 Tim. ii. 10.

deſerved by his pious temper, and unremitting ſervices for GOD and his generation. Salvation is inſeparably connected, though Mercy conſtitutes the bond, with Sanctification, and the works of Holineſs it produces; or, in other words, Sanctification is the evidence, the earneſt, and forerunner of eternal glory. More than this, a Miniſter, who takes heed to himſelf and to his doctrine, and continues in that excellent way of life which the Apoſtle has delineated, may hope to be the happy mean and inſtrument of ſaving the ſouls of them that hear him. GOD may bleſs the ſeed ſown by an impure hand, but I believe that it is rarely found that much good is done by that Miniſter who does not ſincerely intend it, who does not fervently pray for it, and who does not ratify and invigorate his holy Inſtructions with an holy Life, and add to the good Diſcourſes he delivers from the Pulpit the beauties of Holineſs from his example. However, Piety in a Miniſter, and a faithful and laborious diſcharge of the duties of his character is the moſt likely method to arrive at that great point, the eternal Salvation of ſouls; and ſuch Paſtors, we may hope, GOD will delight to crown with multiplied ſeals to their miniſtry in the Conviction, Converſion, Edification, and Comfort of their people, who have GOD's own image upon them, who live much in communion with him, and con-

conſecrate the full purpoſe of their ſouls, and the whole labour of their lives to the glory of their LORD and Maſter, and the everlaſting welfare of the ſouls committed to their care.

So much as this certainly we may conclude from the Apoſtle's ſaying to *Timothy*, that *in doing this, thou ſhalt ſave them that hear thee:* and accordingly Dr *Doddridge* thus expounds the place: " though it is not in thy power " to command ſucceſs, yet thou haſt great " encouragement to hope, that GOD will ſo " bleſs thy labours, as to make thee inſtru- " mental in delivering many ſouls from " death, and raiſing them to complete and " everlaſting felicity."

And now may you, my dear and reverend Brother, by ſuch a temper and conduct as have been now opened before you, ſave yourſelf, and have the daily delightful proofs growing up around you, that you are the honoured happy inſtrument of ſaving them that hear you! Hereby in this courſe you will ſave yourſelf. *Save yourſelf!* What an immenſely important and intereſting conſideration! Let it ſink down into your ſoul, penetrate, poſſeſs it, and abide there for ever, and have the influence of more than ten thouſand other arguments to approve yourſelf a good ſervant of JESUS CHRIST. Your own ſoul is of infinite worth; it is your all; and it is on its ſwift flight to eternity.

nity. You have this day taken upon you a moſt ſolemn and holy Office; an Office, which, if it is neglected and diſhonoured, may plunge you in much more aggravated condemnation than that of a common ſinner. But on the other hand, if the paſtoral Charge is faithfully performed by you with all that Piety and Holineſs which have been deſcribed, you may expect Salvation as ſurely as if Salvation was the juſt, adequate, and claimable reward of your ſervices, or as if you was now in its actual enjoyment. Nay, you may fill your hopes, and rejoice your ſoul with the proſpects of a diſtinguiſhed glory. *As our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* (*x*), ſo may I not ſay, that our ſervices, though in themſelves ſo light, and which are confined to this ſmall moment of time, *work out for us in like manner a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?* As Duty riſes upon Duty, ſo Glory riſes upon Glory, and the abundance of the firſt ſhall ere long be crowned with an abundance of the laſt. *They that are wiſe*, we are told, *ſhall ſhine in the kingdom of their Father as the brightneſs of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteouſneſs, as the ſtars for ever and ever* (*y*).

Think,

(*x*) 2 Cor. iv. 17. (*y*) Dan. xii. 3.

Think, my dear Brother, to animate you in your Maſter's Work, and to excite and inflame you to new improvements in Holineſs, and unremitting activity in your ſacred Work, think often thus with yourſelf. " Now I am in the way of Duty, the " way to Heaven. The ſhadows of the " evening will ſoon be ſtretched out over " me; my diſmiſſion from my ſtation and " labours in my Maſter's vineyard will ſoon " arrive; every vaniſhing day and hour " brings me nearer and nearer to it, and " then will the LORD give me the crown of " life and righteouſneſs which he has pro- " miſed me. Let me work then with all " my might in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, " and be adding freſh jewels to my crown " by winning freſh Converts to JESUS " CHRIST. My own ſalvation, a ſalvation " that exceeds all that eye hath ſeen, that " ear hath heard, or that has entered into " the heart of man to conceive, this ſalva- " tion calls me, calls me, as from the bo- " ſom of that eternity upon whoſe borders " I ſtand, calls me with a voice that I hope " will never be drowned by the temptations " to a vain careleſs ſlothful life, it calls me, " and I muſt obey. How can I ſtand ſtill? " How can I remit my labour, or ſuffer my " zeal to languiſh, when the prize is held out " to my view, and is growing brighter and " brighter by every new advance in perſo-

" nal

" nal Holineſs, and faithful honeſt ſervice
" for the glory of GOD, and the good of
" ſouls?" But ſuperadded to this conſider-
ation of infinite weight, your own Salvation,
take into your thoughts, and thereby call
forth your ſoul to the ſtrenuous and con-
ſtant exertion of itſelf, the eternal ſalvation
of the ſouls of others. Think with your-
ſelf, " Here are ſinners in the gall of bitter-
" neſs, and in the bonds of iniquity; ſin-
" ners that are under the wrath and curſe
" of GOD, and upon the very brink of end-
" leſs deſtruction, and yet they are ſtupid
" and unconcerned, and have no ſenſe nor
" ſight of their danger; and, while their
" damnation ſlumbers not, they lie faſt
" aſleep in their ſins, and it may be are
" wildly dreaming of Heaven and Salvation.
" Can I help pitying them? Shall I not try
" by every method, that the Terrors or the
" Mercies of GOD can ſuggeſt, to awaken,
" convince, convert, and ſave them? Surely
" they ſhall be welcome to my Prayers, and
" Tears, to my beſt Counſels, earneſt Ex-
" poſtulations, and moſt tender affectionate
" Entreaties. Surely they ſhall ſee that I
" will not refuſe them my time, my pains,
" my ſtrength, the very ſweat of my ſoul,
" that I may be honoured, be bleſſed in
" being the kind hand, though under the
" direction, and ſtretched forth in the
" ſtrength of a much greater and kinder
" Hand,

" Hand, that of the Spirit of GOD himſelf,
" of plucking them as brands from ever-
" laſting burnings. If I may ſave but
" one ſinner, it is worth an whole age of
" pains. What manner of Miniſter then
" ought I to be in Zeal and Piety, in inceſ-
" ſant Labour for the good of ſouls, when
" I know not but by the faithful and un-
" wearied diſcharge of my duty, I may be
" the inſtrument of ſaving not only one, but
" many, it may be multitudes of ſouls from
" the eternal horrors and miſeries of hell
" into the eternal felicity and glories of
" Heaven?"

Shall I here take the liberty, my dear Brother, of reciting a paſſage from that excellent man, Dr *Doddridge*, which is moſt admirably adapted to my ſubject, and contains a moſt cogent and animating incentive to our care of ſouls. " The eternal ſalvation,
" ſays he, of one ſoul is of greater import-
" ance, and big with greater events than
" the temporal ſalvation of an whole king-
" dom, though it were for the ſpace of ten
" thouſand ages; becauſe there will come
" up a point, an inſtant in eternity, when
" that one ſoul ſhall have exiſted as many
" ages as all the individuals of an whole
" kingdom, ranged in cloſe ſucceſſion, will in
" the whole have exiſted in ten thouſand
" ages. Therefore one ſoul is capable of
" a larger ſhare of happineſs or miſery

" throughout an endleſs eternity, for that " will be before it ſtill, than an whole " kingdom is capable of in ten thouſand " ages (z)."

I deſpair, my Brother, of ſaying any thing more pertinent or more ſtriking; and therefore I only add my ſincere and earneſt prayer, that, under the penetrating, the overwhelming force of it, you, and all my Reverend Fathers and Brethren may take heed to ourſelves, and to our doctrine, and continue in that good way which has been ſhewn, and thus eventually ſave our own ſouls, and them that hear us. *Amen* and *Amen.*

(z) I know not whether this paſſage is to be found in the Doctor's publications. It was communicated to me, if I forget not, by the late Mr *Joſeph Williams*, of *Kidderminſter*; a Gentleman who was honoured with the Doctor's correſpondence.

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